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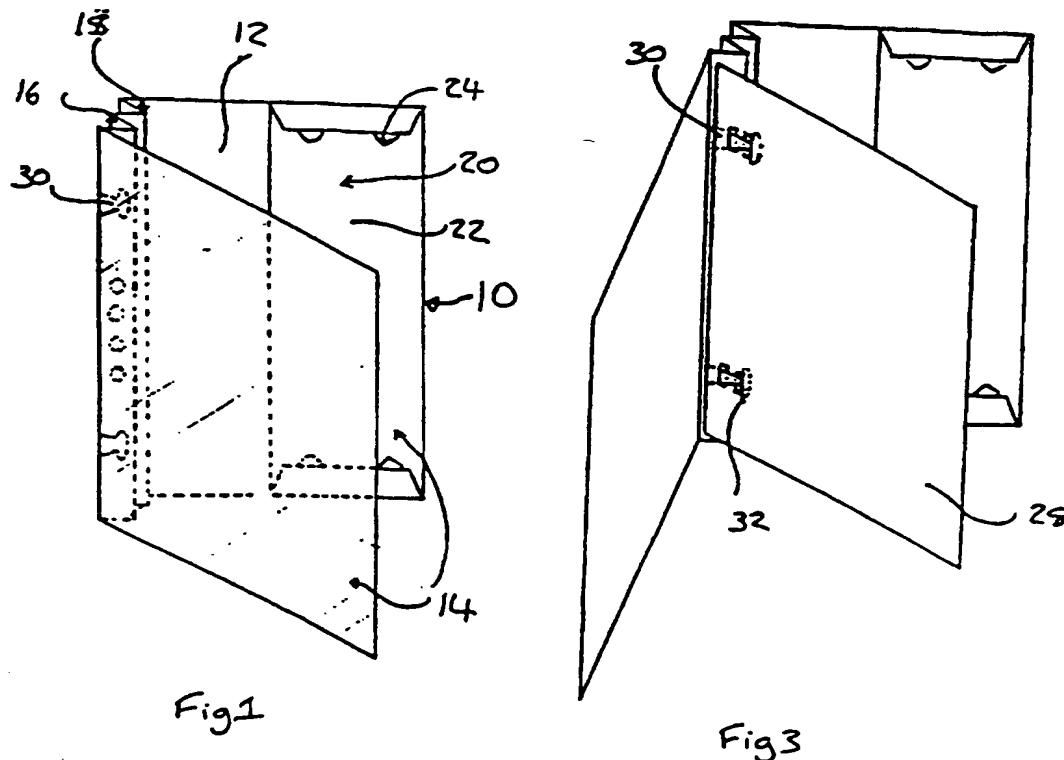
(56) Documents Cited
GB 2261402 A

(58) Field of Search
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Online databases: EPODOC, PAJ, WPI

(54) Abstract Title

Plastic file for storing medical records

(57) The file comprises a transparent plastic (eg polypropylene) cover 12,14 including a rear pocket 20 and a removable insert sheet 28. The pocket is formed by folding over the end of the rear cover portion 12 and engaging tabs 24 in slits (27,Fig2) to retain the pocket in position. The insert sheet 28 (eg of coloured polypropylene) may be attached to the spine 16 of the file by means of tabs 30 engaging slits 32 in the sheet. Removal of the insert sheet is facilitated by frangible strips (34,35,Fig 4). The insert sheet may be written on or carry adhesive labels. The cover may be ribbed to facilitate handling.



The claims were filed later than the filing date but within the period prescribed by Rule 25(1) of the Patents Rules 1995.

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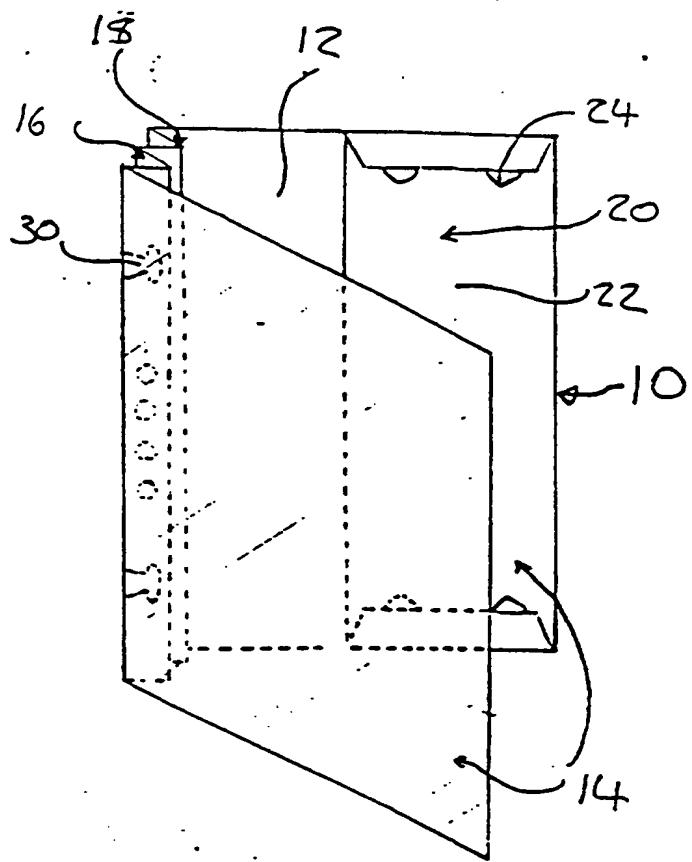


Fig 1

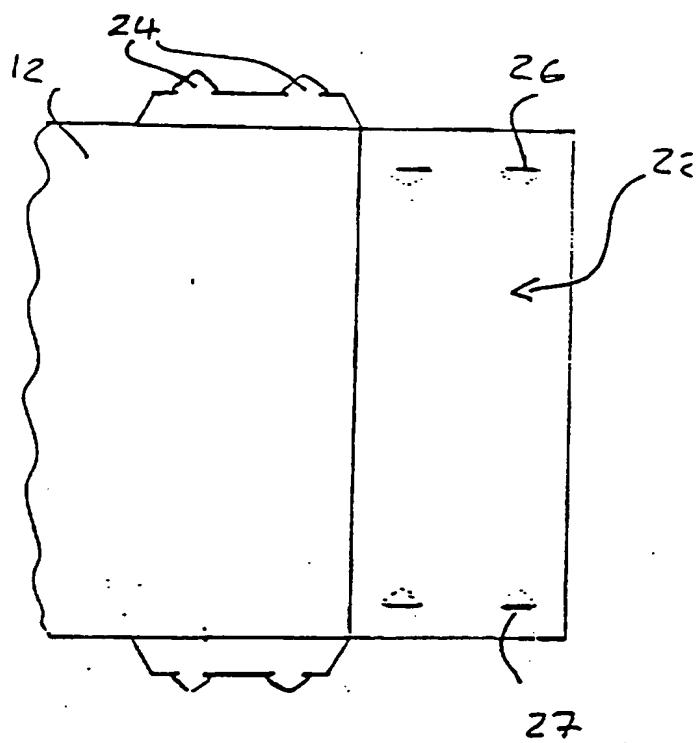


Fig 2

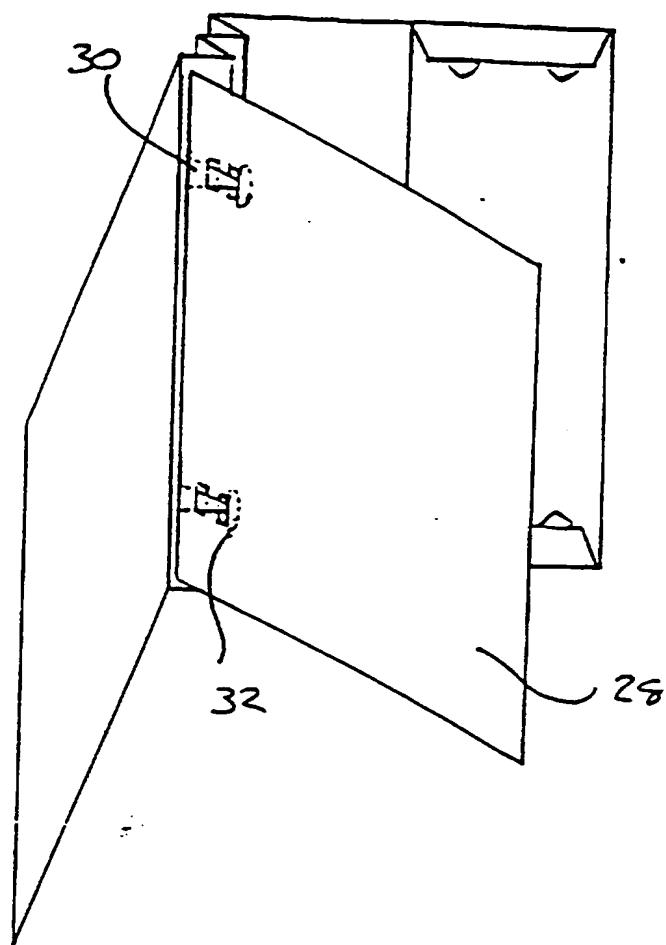


Fig 3

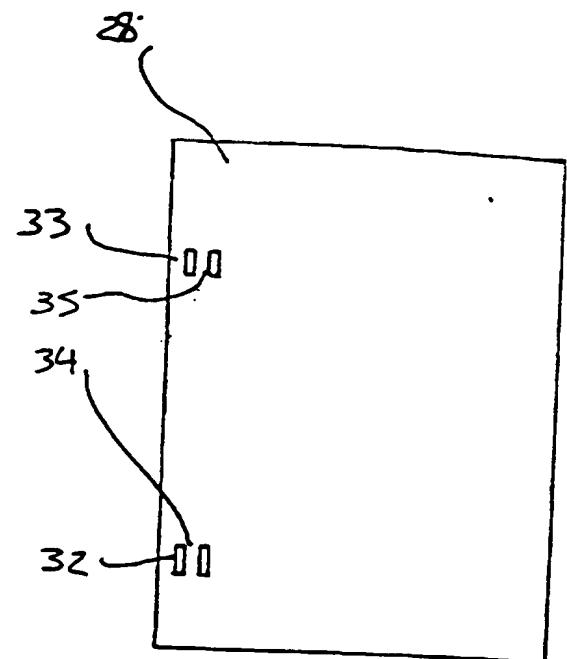


Fig 4.

FILE

The invention relates to a file and is particularly concerned with a re-usable file for storing medical information.

It is known in the art to have files for the 5 storage of medical information constructed of polypropylene or a cellulosic material, for example, paper or card.

Those constructed of cellulosic material possess a number of inherent problems. Firstly, 10 they are not durable with regards to use for a period of up to ten years. Secondly, the files cannot be washed to (a) disinfect the files and (b) remove plastic labels which have been stuck to them. The use of ink is permanent when written on 15 the surface of the file. The result is that, when the records of the patient are transferred from the file, the file is disposed of as it cannot be easily re-used.

Storage files constructed of polypropylene 20 are washable and more durable than those mentioned previously, hence, they are re-usable. The problem with this type of file is that, where pockets are constructed in the file, the use of an adhesive is required to facilitate the 25 construction of the pocket. The adhesive used is relatively expensive and makes the production of files of this type uneconomic.

With both the aforementioned types of file,

they are colour coded according to department (medical use). The inks used in this process are permanent and hence the files can only be used in the department they are originally intended for.

5 Both types of file also possess sheer surfaces which, when carried in number, make them difficult to handle.

An object of the present invention is to provide an improved file.

10 According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a file for storing medical information comprising a front and back cover, said front and back covers being connected by a spine and at least one of the covers being constructed from a transparent material, first means at or adjacent the spine for receiving and retaining material to be held by the file, and second means to secure an insert sheet next to the transparent cover. Preferably, the transparent material is polypropylene, particularly ribbed polypropylene. The insert sheet may be a coloured sheet and preferably is made of polypropylene.

15 The first means may comprise a guide defined by the spine. The second means may comprise interconnecting means between the transparent cover and the insert sheet.

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In the preferred arrangement, the front and back cover are formed from a single sheet.

Alternatively, the covers may be separate and connected together.

According to a further aspect of the invention, there is provided a file for storing medical information comprising a front and back cover, said front and back covers being connected by a spine and at least one of the covers being constructed from a transparent material, first means at or adjacent the spine for receiving and retaining material to be held by the file, and a pocket on the face of a cover formed from a single sheet used to construct the respective cover. The file may also include second means to secure an insert sheet next to the transparent cover.

Preferably the transparent material is polypropylene, particularly ribbed polypropylene. The insert sheet may be a coloured sheet and preferably is made of polypropylene. The first means may comprise a guide defined by the spine.

The second means may comprise interconnecting means between the transparent cover and the insert sheet. In the preferred arrangement, the front and back cover are formed from a single sheet. Alternatively, the covers may be separate and connected together. In the preferred arrangement, the pocket is located on the inside face of the back cover and preferably is polypropylene.

A preferred embodiment of a file for storing

medical information in accordance with the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

5 Figure 1 is a perspective view of a folder in accordance with the invention;

Figure 2 is a plan view of part of the folder of Figure 1 showing the construction of a pocket;

10 Figure 3 is a perspective view of the folder of Figure 1 with an insert sheet attached; and,

Figure 4 is a plan view of the insert shown in Figure 3.

A file (10) is constructed from a single sheet of material (12) and is folded so as to define a front cover (14), a rear cover (15) and a spine (16). The spine (16) inter-connects the two covers (14,15) and is folded along its longitudinal axis to define two guides (18). The single sheet of material is transparent polypropylene ribbed on its outer surface to facilitate handling. On an inside face of the rear cover (15) is a pocket (20). The pocket (20) comprises a substantially rectangular pocket body member (22) formed by folding an end of the sheet (12) over on itself across its width. The pocket body member (22) has two sets of two slits (26,27), one set of slits (26) being substantially towards the top edge of the pocket (20) as viewed

in the drawing and the other set (27) being substantially towards the bottom edge of the pocket (20) as viewed in the drawing. The pocket body member (22) is secured in position by 5 securing means comprising four tabs (24) formed as part of the single sheet of material (12) so as to protrude therefrom, which are inserted into the slits (26,27) contained in the pocket body member (22) as shown in Figures 1 and 2.

10 An insert sheet (28) is attached to file (10) as shown in Figure 3. The insert sheet (28) is made from polypropylene and has two sets of two slits (32,33). One set of slits (32) is substantially towards the top of the insert sheet 15 (28) and proximal to the left-hand edge as viewed in the drawings Figure 3 and Figure 4. The other set of slits (33) is substantially towards the bottom of the insert sheet (28), and proximal to the left-hand edge as viewed in the drawings 20 Figure 3 and Figure 4. The file (10) possesses an insert securing means comprising two tabs (30) formed as part of the single sheet of material (12) so as to protrude therefrom from the guide 25 (16) adjacent the front cover (14). The two tabs (30) are inserted into the slits (32,33) contained within the insert sheet (28). The slits (32,33) are separated by frangible strips (34,35). When secured, the insert sheet (28) is next to an

substantially parallel to the front cover (14) as shown in Figure 3.

In use, the insert sheet (28) may be written on using ink and/or graphite or, alternatively, 5 could have adhesive labels stuck to it. Whilst the insert sheet (28) may be washed to remove adhesive labels, ink is permanent on the insert sheet (28). In this instance, if the file is to be recycled, the insert sheet (28) may be removed 10 by breaking of the frangible strips (34,35) located between each set of two slits (32,33). Breaking of the strips (34,35) facilitates the easy removal of the tabs (30,32) from the slits (32,33) thereby freeing the insert sheet (28). A 15 new insert sheet could now be fastened to the file in the manner previously described so that the file can be re-used. Although the invention has been described with reference to tabs securing the pocket in place, it is foreseen that other pocket 20 securing means may be used, for example, plastic rivets. Plastic rivets may also be used as the insert securing means.

EURO MEDICAL FILE

CLAIMS

1. The Euro Medical File in its overall design is that it does not require any other materials i.e. staples or glue in its manufacture.
2. The product is designed to be re-usable.
3. The internal front page can be seen clearly through the cover and is protected from the external environment.
4. The internal front page is designed that it can be taken out but designed not to come out unless it is required to do so by the manner of the page attachments.
5. The pocket is designed to stay complete by the inserted tags, but by way of where the tags are they do not hinder or damage paperwork that is to be stored in the pocket.



Application No: GB 9821457.0
Claims searched: 1-5

8 Examiner: Graham Russell
Date of search: 31 March 2000

Patents Act 1977
Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK Cl (Ed.R): B6E (EDE, EDG)

Int Cl (Ed.7): B42F 7/02, 13/00

Other: Online: EPODOC, PAJ, WPI

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
X	GB 2261402 A (KABUKOBA) see page 5 line 34 - page 6 line 6	1-3

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.